

Press Release

PR 1858

10 March 2008

For Immediate Release

Anti-bullying work put under the spotlight

Work being done across East Sussex to combat bullying has been highlighted at a conference organised by the County Council.

The conference, attended by representatives from schools, other agencies who work with children and young people, and councillors, was organised by the council's Anti-Bullying team which is at the forefront of tackling bullying issues across the county.

As well as highlighting some of the successful work already being done in the county, the event at the Eastbourne Centre on Thursday (6 March) also included discussion around future developments to anti-bullying initiatives. This included a number of workshops on subjects such as cyber-bullying, self harm, and promoting positive relationships.

Crucially important to the day was the involvement of a number of young people including a presentation from the county's Youth Cabinet, which has been campaigning on the issue of bullying, and several presentations from schools.

Prizes were also handed out to the young people whose winning designs for anti-bullying posters will be used in the county's on-going anti-bullying campaign. There were more than 200 entries for the poster competition which was held as part of anti-bullying week back in November 2007.

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The key-note speaker at the conference was Val McFarlane, the national co-ordinator of the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the Director of Children's Services in East Sussex, Matt Dunkley also made a speech.

He told the conference why tackling bullying was such a high priority for the county council. "It is clear that the physical and emotional well-being of every child is inextricably linked to a child's potential for learning. What this means is, if a child does not feel safe whether at home, at school, or in the wider community then they will not be able to flourish or learn."

Cllr Rupert Simmons, the council's lead member for Learning and School Effectiveness said: "We are delighted and proud of the work undertaken by our anti-bullying team which is seen both regionally and nationally as a unique service.

"I also welcome the involvement of young people themselves, not only at this event but also in the Youth Cabinet and through our on-going anti-bullying survey. A lot is being done to combat bullying but there's still much work to be done and no room for complacency."

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